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Addendum

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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (item 4 (b))

Section 23. Protection of and assistance to refugees

1. At its 30th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 23)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the programme of work under this section.

4. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of providing assistance to women and children refugees. The view was expressed that countries receiving refugees should receive adequate assistance.

5. Concern was expressed regarding the reduced level of extrabudgetary resources projected to be available during the biennium 2000–2001 and the negative impact that such reduction would have on the assistance to refugees, in particular new refugees in Kosovo. The view was expressed that there should be no discriminatory treatment of refugees in the world.

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6. The view was expressed that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) should continue to pay particular attention to the situation of refugees in Africa.

7. The view was expressed that the change by UNHCR to a unified budget for its voluntarily funded programmes, with its emphasis on performance-based principles, was welcome.

8. The view was expressed that more precise language with definitive indicators was necessary so that a meaningful assessment of UNHCR performance could be made at the end of the biennium.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee recommended that on the basis of the principle of international burden-sharing and solidarity, the level of humanitarian assistance to host countries for the care and maintenance of refugees should be proportionate with the number of refugees they are hosting. In this regard, due attention shall be given to the prolonged presence of refugees, in particular in the developing countries.

10. The Committee stressed that the most durable solution to refugee problems is voluntary and safe repatriation to their countries of origin.

11. The Committee recommended that the Secretary-General revise the programme narrative of section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, to take fully into account General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 (sect. III, para. 82).

12. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 23, Protection of and assistance to refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.